

# EARRAGHAIL RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Appendix 7.4

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Prepared for

ScottishPower Renewables Ltd



## Appendix 7.4 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

The sensitivity of the host landscape character types/area is assessed below.

Landscape sensitivity is not absolute and can only be defined in relation to each development and its location. To assess the sensitivity of a particular landscape it is good practice to consider the value attached to the landscape and its susceptibility to the particular form of change likely to result from the proposed Development. Therefore, the assessment text focussed on the sensitivity of the landscape receptor near the Site to the proposed Development. In the main this has been taken from the Argyll and Bute Landscape Wind Energy Capacity Study (2017) and NatureScot Landscape Character Assessment in Scotland digital map based LCA (2019) (*quotes shown in italics*) as well as from local sources and site assessment.

**Table 1.1 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment**

Host Landscape: ABC6. Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll				
Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Assessment	Judgement
<b>Value attached to Landscapes</b>				
<b>Designated scenic quality</b>	No specific designation	National or regional designation	No national or local landscape designations within this landscape	Community
<b>Landscape condition/ quality</b>	Landscape in a poor state of repair with incongruous elements	Landscape fully intact in good condition with limited incongruous elements	Whilst there is extensive forestry within this landscape type, there is also extensive blanket bog and at the northern end of the Kintyre peninsula there is <i>'an extensive band of broadleaved woodland along the Skipness to Tarbert coast.'</i>	Regional/Community
<b>Rarity and/or representativeness</b>	Commonplace elements, features, or the landscape itself. Not a good example of the landscape type.	Presence of rare elements or features or rarity of the landscape itself. Very representative landscape.	Any blanket bog in good condition is a valued landscape element but some has been drained. The deciduous woodland is also a valued landscape element.	Regional
<b>Conservation Interests</b>	Low presence of wildlife, earth, archaeology or historical interests	High presence of wildlife, earth, archaeology or historical interests	There are no wildlife designations on the Site itself but deciduous woodland on the northern end of the peninsula is both SSSI and SAC. There are elements of historic interest near the Site.	Regional
<b>Cultural associations</b>	No specific cultural associations.	Strong cultural associations which contribute to perceptions of natural beauty.	There are some historic features amongst the upland and cultural associations within this landscape type.	Regional
<b>Amenity and recreation</b>	Limited amenity/recreational function where experience of the landscape is important	Well used for recreation where experience of the landscape is important. May contain National Trails or other long-distance routes.	The Kintyre Way runs through the centre of the Site between Tarbert and Skipness and extend down along the length of this LCT to Campbeltown. However, remaining parts of this LCT are predominantly inaccessible due to the ground conditions.	Regional
<b>Wildness/ Sense of Remoteness / Tranquility</b>	Busy evidence of human activity	Remote, peaceful or sense and tranquility, solitude and emptiness	<i>'The coast between Skipness and Tarbert has strong wildland qualities because of its ruggedness, naturalness and remoteness'</i> . However, it is also noted that <i>'the perception of naturalness is reduced by the presence of extensive commercial forestry...'</i>	Regional/Community
<b>Overall Judgement of Value</b>				<b>Regional</b>

Host Landscape: ABC6. Upland Forest Moor Mosaic (A&BC 2017) / LCT 39 Plateau Moor and Forest – Argyll				
Factors affecting sensitivity	Lower Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Higher Sensitivity to Wind Energy	Assessment	Judgement
<b>Susceptibility</b>				
<b>Scale</b>	Large scale landscapes where the turbines may be in proportion with the landscape are generally less sensitive.	Small scale intimate landscapes are generally more sensitive to large scale structures.	<i>'Extensive, large scale mosaic of open moorland and forestry'</i> It is also noted that the <i>'scale is considerably reduced within the more complex irregular small hills found on the outer fringes of this character type...'</i>	Medium
<b>Landform</b>	Smooth regular flowing, flat or uniform landscapes	Dramatic, rugged and complex landscapes	<i>'The uplands within the Kintyre peninsula generally form a homogenous undulating plateau- generally lower in the middle-with broad gentle slopes and rounded summits. Occasional more craggy slopes and pronounced hills such as...and Cnoc a Bhaile-shios in the north, protrude above forest.'</i> The Site is located away from the craggy slopes of Cnoc a Bhaile-shios.	Medium
<b>Openness/enclosure</b>	Open and exposed landscapes	Enclosed and sheltered landscapes	The landscape type is generally open and exposed, however there is more enclosure and shelter within the valleys which incise this landscape type. The Site is commercial forestry and this provides some enclosure locally.	Medium/Low
<b>Land cover</b>	Extensive areas of simple or regular landcover (including intensive farming and forestry)	Complex, intimate or mosaic cover	<i>'Extensive, large-scale mosaic of open moorland and forestry'</i> <i>'Remaining areas are open moorland with extensive marginal upland pasture and blanket bog'</i> The Site is currently commercial forestry.	Medium/Low
<b>Complexity and patterns</b>	Simple and sweeping lines, linear feature and patterns	Complex or irregular patterns	The <i>'simple land cover found within the upland interior'</i> accords well with the wind turbines	Medium/Low
<b>Built Environment</b>	Contemporary masts, pylons, industrial elements, buildings infrastructure, settlements	Established, traditional or historic built character	<i>'Settlement is sparse.'</i> There is the presence of other windfarms within the upland plateau of this landscape character type.	Medium
<b>Views intervisibility</b>	Visually contained and have limited inward or outward views	Extensive views within or of the area with distant horizons.	<i>'...restricted visibility of the interior uplands from roads and settlement along the Kintyre coastal edge reduces sensitivity.'</i> <i>'The remote coastal area of this character type between Skipness and Tarbert is also visible from outer Loch Fyne and the Ardlamont Peninsula. There are also long views to the Kintyre uplands from Arran...'</i>	High/medium
<b>Landscapes that form settings, skylines, backdrops, focal points</b>	Generally low lying landscapes without distinctive landform or horizon	Areas with strong features, focal points that define the setting or skyline	The northern end of the Kintyre peninsula between Skipness and Tarbert (part of which is the Site) forms part of the backdrop to highly scenic views from the outer Loch Fyne/Ardlamont Peninsula, Bute and Arran/Kilbrannan Sound, however this landscape is not generally a focal point of views from these areas as the landform is not so distinctive.	High/medium
<b>Overall Judgement of Susceptibility</b>				<b>Medium</b>
<b>Overall Judgement of Sensitivity</b>				<b>Medium</b>